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A
DISCOURSE
ON THE

*Benefit which the Holy Spirit of God is of to
Man in his Journey through Life.*

[Price Six - Pence.]

1991



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*Benefit which the Holy Spirit of God is of to
Man in his Journey through Life.*

Preached at

CHRIST-CHURCH,

IN

NEWGATE-STREET,

ON

WHITSUN-MONDAY, May 19, 1755,

Pursuant to the

Will of Miss ELIZABETH HILL, late of
Falmouth, Cornwall.

THE SECOND EDITION.

By WILLIAM ROMAINE,
Lecturer of St. Dunstan's in the West.

The Fruit of the Spirit is in all Goodness.
Eph. v. 9.

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P R E F A C E.

THE following discourse was drawn up at the request of Miss Hill's executor, to whom I am greatly obliged for appointing me to preach on Whit-fun-Monday, agreeably to the Words of her will, on the benefit which the Holy Spirit of God is of to man in his journey through life: And what I thought myself bound in duty to deliver from the pulpit, I have since been persuaded to send from the press; for although it contains nothing new either in the matter or manner, yet I think it incumbent upon me to bear my public testimony to the great doctrine of christianity here inculcated. I am prepared for the reception it will meet with, not only from the monthly reviewers, the avowed enemies of the established church, and its established

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doctrines,

P R E F A C E.

doctrines, but also from all mere nominal Christians. But let them ridicule it ever so much as Hutchinsonian Enthusiasm, yet since it is expressly taught in scripture, and maintained in the clearest manner by our church, it will give me no concern to be reckoned an Enthusiast, while the scripture is on my side, or an Hutchinsonian, while the church of England supports me ; and if men will call the plain doctrines of scripture Enthusiasm, and will treat the articles, and homilies, and liturgy of our church as Hutchinsonianism, I hope I shall live and die a Church of England-Hutchinsonian-Enthusiast.

EZEK.



EZEK. XXXvi. 25, 26, 27.

Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.



OUR blessed Saviour shewed himself alive after his passion, by many infallible proofs, being seen of his apostles forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God, and being assembled together with them, he commanded them, that they should not depart from *Jerusalem*, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me; for *John* truly baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the holy Ghost, not many days hence. And

And according to his most true promise, the holy Ghost came down as at this time from heaven, with a sudden great sound, as it had been a mighty wind, in the likeness of fiery tongues, lighting upon the apostles, to teach them, and to lead them to all truth, giving them both the gifts of divers languages, and also boldness with fervent zeal, constantly to preach the gospel unto all nations, whereby we have been brought out of darkness and error, into the clear light and true knowledge of Jesus Christ.

This is the subject of the present festival. We are here assembled to commemorate the gifts and graces which the holy Spirit bestowed upon the apostles, and to bless God for our interest in them. The same Spirit is still with us, and will abide with us for ever. He is with us, not to bring the world over to the outward profession of christianity ; for that is already effected, and the extraordinary powers, which were necessary to effect it are ceased. Christianity is established, and outward miracles are no longer needful to be the outward proofs of it. But the holy Spirit has still the same inward work to carry on, which he had in the apostles time, and it requires the same degree of divine and almighty power, although it be not exerted in outward miracles. The mind of every man is by nature in darkness and ignorance, blind as to the things of
God ;

God; this he has to enlighten with saving truth. The will and all the affections are depraved, and it is his gracious office to incline and dispose them to comply with the will of God. And after the understanding is enlightened, and the heart renewed, we have still no power to walk in the ways of holiness, without the special grace of the holy Spirit, whose guidance is necessary every moment, and for every thought and word and work. These are called the ordinary operations of the Spirit of God, not as if they were less divine, or any thing short of the almighty operations in the apostolic age, but because these were extraordinary, given for a certain fix'd time, to carry on a particular work, but the former were common to all believers, to the apostles themselves as believers, and are to be the ordinary gifts and graces of every christian unto the end of the world. And whoever has received these ordinary operations, has in his own heart clear and full testimony of the Godhead, and almighty power of the blessed Spirit. He wants no outward miracles. This great inward work is to him complete evidence; and he is able to rest his salvation with as full trust and confidence upon it, as if he had seen the apostles exert their miraculous gifts and graces. May the Lord and giver of all grace be pleased to bestow upon you this inward witness, and
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may he enable you to look up to him for it while I am,

First, Illustrating these truths from the prophet's authority in the text, and then

Secondly, Applying them to your spiritual use and benefit.

And by the consideration of these two particulars, I hope to be able to answer the good purposes of our present meeting. We are called together by the will of a late charitable and pious lady, who appointed a sermon to be preached upon this day concerning the *benefit which the holy spirit of God is of to man, during his journey through this life*. The subject is suitable to the great festival, which the church now celebrates, and the words which I have read contain a clear and full account of the benefit we receive from the holy Spirit from the beginning to the end of our christian life. *I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean, &c.* The clean water was to be sprinkled upon them to cleanse the soul; this effect is here ascribed to it; but water cannot reach the soul, or if it could, yet it was not able so to act upon it, as to cleanse it from any sinful filthiness. But the Spirit of God acts upon our spirits as water does upon the body, and therefore it was the
outward

outward and visible sign of his inward and spiritual grace in the old testament, as well as the new. The phrase of *sprinkling clean water* to cleanse them from sin refers to the legal ablutions, and more particularly to the great typical purification from sin, of which we read *Numbers* xix. The ashes of the red heifer, which was burnt without the camp, were to be mixed with pure running water to be a purification for sin, and whoever contracted any legal uncleanness, and had not this sin-water sprinkled upon him to purify himself, that soul was to be cut off from among the congregation. St. *Paul* has applied part of this service to our Lord's suffering without the gate (*Heb.* xiii. 11, 12, 13.) and St. *John* has applied the other part (vii. 38, 39.) where upon Christ's describing the rivers of living water, which should flow from believers, he says, *But this he spake of the spirit*, he spake of water as the known emblem of the Spirit, and the christian church has always used it for his emblem in the sacrament of baptism, wherein his grace cleanses to the purifying of the soul, as water cleanses to the purifying of the flesh.

Water then is the instituted type of the holy Spirit, and pouring water to cleanse, is in the scripture manner of expression pouring out of the holy Spirit to cleanse the soul; and his cleansing grace must be the

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thing

thing here spoken of, because it was to purify them from all sin. *I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean, from all your filthiness and from all your Idols will I cleanse you,* from all the filthiness of sin, and from all the guilt of idolatry I will purify them. Sin polluted all the faculties of the soul, and my good Spirit shall cleanse them all. The understanding he shall purify by removing its natural blindness, and by opening their eyes to see the error of their ways, that they may be brought to Jesus Christ for salvation, and may have their hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience with the all purifying blood of the lamb of God, which will justify them, and may have grace and power to walk in the statutes of the Lord, and to keep his judgments, which will sanctify them; and thus he cleanses all the faculties: For it follows in the second verse of the text, *A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.* The cleansing of the heart is the greatest work of divine grace, because there is in every sinner hardness, and an impenitent heart, which no human power can soften. The scripture speaks of it in the strongest expressions, *The sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron, and with the point of a diamond, it is graven upon the table,*

table of their heart; and what power is able to erase this deep engraving, except the almighty God, who declares, *I will give you a new heart*, renewed in all its faculties, *and a new spirit will I put within you*, endued with new appetites and new affections, *and I will take away the stony heart*, the refreshing streams of my grace shall soften the old hardened heart of sin, which would take no good impression, *and I will give you an heart of flesh*, soft and pliable, yielding to the motions of my grace, and willing to have the law engraved by the Spirit of the living God upon the fleshly tables of the heart. And after the heart and the affections are thus renewed, and disposed to love the will of God, the holy Spirit was still to proceed, and to go on in the work of sanctification, in which his grace is absolutely necessary. Even after the stony heart is taken out, we still want his guidance, and whenever he leaves us to ourselves, we cannot take one step in our journey towards heaven. And therefore God promises to them, who had a new heart, *that he would put his spirit within them, and cause them to walk in his statutes*. His Spirit should be their guide, both to lead them into the way of God's commandments, and to give them strength and power to walk in these ways steadily unto the end: for the light of nature could never direct sinners into the paths

of God's commandments, nor could the best natural abilities go forward in them, unless God should put his Spirit within us, and give us power to walk in his statutes. We want his support every step we take throughout the whole work of sanctification. If we go forward, he is the cause. He gives us both the will and the power; for it is he who worketh in us both to will and to do. It is the Spirit of God within us, who causes us to walk in his statutes, and to keep his judgments, and do them.

And thus the prophet has taught us of what benefit the holy Spirit is to man during his journey through this life. We cannot so much as set out upon our journey to heaven, until he cleanse all the faculties, by removing the blindness of the understanding, and the depravity of the will and affections. It is his office to give us a new heart and a new spirit, disposed to receive impressions of the divine law, and then to endue it with power to walk in the statutes of God, and to keep his judgments, and to do them; so that every step we take from the first moment we set out, until we happily arrive at the end of our journey, is directed and supported by the holy Spirit of God. This is the prophet's doctrine, which I come

Secondly, To apply to your spiritual use and benefit. And if we make a right use
of

of it, we must not only endeavour to be convinced of its truth, but also to find the power of it operating upon our lives and conversations; for it would be to no purpose to believe, that the holy Spirit is the author and finisher of the whole work of grace, if this belief should rest unoperative in the head, and never dispose us to seek the experience of it in the heart, and in the rest of the faculties. Since his grace is to cleanse us from all the pollutions of sin, and to create in us a new heart, and to renew a right spirit within us, and to give us power to walk in the way of God's commandments, let us not hear these truths as mere speculative points, but let us suffer the conviction of them to operate in our lives, and to carry us to seek our own interest in them. And I hope the blessed Spirit will render profitable to these good purposes what I have to offer concerning the usefulness of his guidance throughout the journey of life.

Sin polluted the whole man, and made every part and power unclean and abominable altogether, and the prophet ascribes to the holy Spirit the whole work of cleansing the soul. His grace is necessary to purify every faculty. He begins with removing the darkness of the understanding, and enlightening it with all-saving truth, of which by nature we are ignorant. Sin rendered us incapable of seeing spiritual objects. It did not
entirely

entirely destroy the organ of sight, but it entirely stopt all communion between it, and the fountain of light, and brought the soul into such a state as the body would be in, if the sun was blotted out of heaven, and the moon and stars were no more to reflect their enlivening rays upon the earth. This would be a most uncomfortable and heavy night, in which although the bodily organ of sight remained, yet these outward objects would be as invisible, as if the organ was quite destroyed. And sin produced the same effects in the spiritual world. Every son of *Adam* is in darkness and the shadow of death, until the holy Spirit of God enlighten the eyes of the understanding. St. *Paul's* account of the *Gentiles* is this (*Eph. iv. 18.*) *they had the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart.* Sin darkened the understanding and alienated them from the life of God, by separating them from that divine light, which is the principle of their spiritual life, and therefore they lived no longer unto God, but were cut off from all intercourse and communion with him. In this state of darkness and blindness we all continue, entirely ignorant of the things of God, until his good Spirit manifest them unto us. The natural understanding in its highest refinement cannot discover them; *for the natural man receiveth not the things*

things of the spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned (1 Cor. ii. 14) The natural man cannot receive spiritual things. God must reveal them unto him by his spirit, before he can have the least discernment of them, even what is revealed concerning them in scripture cannot be discerned, until the holy Spirit open the eyes to behold it. And under the sense of this truth the prophet thus intreats God. *Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law, Psalm cxix. 18.* to open the eyes to behold them was the work of God. And again he prays, *give me understanding* (it was the gift of God) *that I may learn thy commandments. I am thy servant, give me understanding, that I may know thy testimonies, Psalm cxix. 73, 125.* And to the same effect St. Paul prays for his *Ephesians*, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ the father of glory would give unto them the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him, *that the eyes of their understanding might be enlightened.* This was the work of God. He was to give unto them the Spirit, and the Spirit was to give them wisdom, and to reveal the knowledge of God to them, by which means the eyes of their understanding would be enlightened.

This is the doctrine of scripture; and I may confirm it from an authority, which I esteem
next

next to the word of God, and that is the sense of our Church upon this point. In the collect for the 5th *Sunday* after *Easter* she teaches us to pray, " O Lord, from whom
 " all good things do come ; grant to us thy
 " humble servants, that by thy holy inspi-
 " ration we may think those things that be
 " good, &c." We cannot so much as think a good thought, unless we have the holy inspiration of God : And again on the 9th *Sunday* after *Trinity* we pray, " Grant to us
 " Lord we beseech thee, the spirit to think
 " and do always such things as be rightful,
 " that we who cannot do any thing that is
 " good without thee, may by thee be ena-
 " bled to live according to thy will, through
 " Jesus Christ our Lord." To the same purpose we read in the 3d part of the homily for rogation week. " Let us meekly call
 " upon the bountiful spirit, the holy Ghost,
 " to inspire us with his presence, that we
 " may be able to hear the goodness of God
 " to our salvation. For without his lively
 " inspiration can we not so much as speak
 " the name of the mediator. No man can
 " say, that Jesus is the Lord, but by the
 " holy Ghost. Much less should we be able
 " to understand these great mysteries, that
 " be opened to us by Christ. For we have
 " received, saith St. *Paul*, not the spirit of
 " the world, but the spirit which is of God,
 " for this purpose, that we may know the
 " things

“ things which are freely given to us of God.
 “ In the power of the holy Ghost resteth all
 “ ability to know God and to please him.
 “ It is he that purifieth the mind by his
 “ secret working. He enlighteneth the
 “ heart to conceive worthy thoughts of al-
 “ mighty God.” These authorities are
 clear. They expressly declare, that we can-
 not think such things as be rightful without
 the holy inspiration of the Spirit of God.
 These are the sentiments of scripture, and
 of the Church of *England*, concerning the
 first step we are to take in our christian
 course.

By removing the darkness of the natural
 understanding, and by enlightening it with
 all-saving truth, the holy Spirit enables us to
 see the way to heaven, the next step is to
 dispose the will to walk in it: For after we
 see the right way, yet we have no desire to
 walk in it, until he renew the heart. It is
 the work of his grace to incline the will, and
 to dispose it aright, that it may consent to
 the will of God: For our wills are by nature
 corrupt. The will of the flesh is opposite to
 the will of God; and our affections are so
 depraved, that they choose only evil and
 continually. *And God saw that the wicked-*
ness of man was great in the earth, and that
every imagination of the thoughts of his heart
was only evil continually, Gen. vi. 5. And
 this continually evil heart is also obdurately
 C evil.

evil. It is stony and rocky, harder than adamant. All the powers in nature cannot soften it. Sin has rendered it incapable of any good impressi^on, unless it be made by an almighty arm. He alone who created the heart can make it relent before him. To soften an hardened heart is as great a work as to create a world, and therefore the prophet prays, *create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.* To *create* is to make a thing out of nothing, and the same creative power which brought the heavens and the earth out of nothing is necessary to create in the sinner a clean heart: For to cast him in a new mould, and to make him a new man is harder then to make him a man at first; because nothing opposed his creation. God spake, and it was done. But the heart, which was conceived in sin, has lived in sin, and has loved sin, and placed all its affections upon it, has an utter aversion to this new creation. And what power is able to take the love of sin out of the heart, and to render it willing to be made pure and holy? Say, who is equal to this great work? Certainly, no created power. He alone can do it, who turneth the hard rocks into a standing water, and the flint stone into a springing well. He can do it, and he has promised, " I will give you a
 " new heart, and a new spirit will I put
 " within you, and I will take away your
 " stony

“ stony heart, and I will give you an heart
 “ of flesh, and I will put my Spirit within
 “ you.” My Spirit shall work this great
 change. He shall take the hard stony heart
 out of you, which is altogether sinful, and
 shall enable you to delight in the law of
 God, in the inner man. And thus he re-
 news the heart, *for we are saved by the wash-
 ing of regeneration, and renewing of the holy
 Ghost. (Titus iii. 5.)* And

This is the language of our church. On
 christmas day we use these words, “ al-
 “ mighty God — grant that we being rege-
 “ nerate, and made thy children by adoption
 “ and grace, may daily be renewed by thy
 “ holy Spirit, &c.” And again on the 19th
Sunday after Trinity we pray. “ O God, for-
 “ asmuch as without thee we are not able to
 “ please thee; mercifully grant, that thy
 “ holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule
 “ our hearts, through Jesus Christ our
 “ Lord.” We are taught the reason for of-
 fering up these petitions in the 10th article.
 Of free-will.

“ The condition of man after the fall of
 “ *Adam* is such, that he cannot turn and
 “ prepare himself by his own natural strength
 “ and good works to faith and calling upon
 “ God : Wherefore we have no power to do
 “ good works pleasant and acceptable to
 “ God, without the grace of God by Christ
 “ preventing us, that we may have a good-

“ will, and working with us when we have
 “ that good-will.” We have lost by the fall
 the power of turning and preparing our
 hearts to any religious exercise, and we have
 not even the good-will, much less the power
 to do any one good work, until the grace of
 God go before and dispose the will, and af-
 terwards work with us when we have that
 good-will; from whence it is evident, that
 the will and the affections must be renewed
 by the holy Ghost, before there can be any
 good in fallen man; agreeably to what we
 read (*Prov. xvi. 1.*) *that the preparations of
 the heart in man are from the Lord.*

From these authorities of scripture, and of
 our own church it must be evident to every
 unprejudiced person, that the heart is by na-
 ture enclined to evil, hard and stony, and
 unwilling to receive any good impressions,
 and no power can soften it but an almighty
 Spirit, whose grace alone is able to renew it
 after the image of him that created it.

And after the understanding is enlightened,
 and the will and affections renewed, we
 still want grace every moment to enable us
 to go on in the ways of holiness. After we
 have received justifying grace, we continually
 stand in need of the sanctifying grace of the
 holy Spirit. We cannot take one step with-
 out his assistance: For it is he who worketh
 in us both to will and to do. We have no
 power nor might in ourselves, but all our
 sufficiency

sufficiency is of God. In our spiritual course his grace is as necessary, as breathing is to the body. There is but one word in scripture for the air which the body breaths, and for that grace which is the breath of our spiritual life; and if you cannot move, much less run a race, without breath, how then can you run through your christian course without grace? You must breath the air in at every step, and you must have grace breathed into you every step you take in your way to heaven. And therefore when our blessed Lord breathed upon the apostles he at the same time explained the meaning of what he did by saying, *receive ye the holy Ghost*, whose gracious office it is to act upon the soul, as breath does upon the body: And hence it is called *inspiration*, which signifies breathing in, and since this inspiration is as necessary to our spiritual life, as breath is to our animal life, is it not from hence certain, that we cannot take one step in the ways of holiness, unless the inspiration of the Almighty enable us to proceed.

And these are the sentiments of the word of God. O Lord, I know, says Jeremiah (x. 23.) *that the way of man is not in himself, it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.* The Psalmist, acknowledges it, for he prays, *Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not. Incline my heart unto thy testimonies, and make me to go in the path of*

of

of thy commandments. And again he says, *I will run the way of thy commandments when thou shalt enlarge my heart*, when thou shalt give it freedom and liberty, that it may walk with pleasure in those paths which are to the natural man grievous. And the new testament opens and explains these expressions of the old by assuring us, that believers *walk in the spirit, and are led by the spirit*, and are strengthened by the spirit in the inner man, *who gives them grace to serve God acceptably : For the fruit of the spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth, proving what is acceptable unto the Lord*. And to enable us to produce these fruits, the comforter is to be with us for ever. He is to guide and direct our lives, and to govern our conversations. He will never leave us, nor forsake us, but will support us with his grace every moment. And this his continual assistance our church prays for in these words, “ O God, forasmuch as without thee we are not able to please thee, mercifully grant that thy holy spirit may in ALL things direct and rule our hearts.” (9th *Sunday* after *Trinity*) And again, “ O Lord — grant that by thy holy inspiration we may think those things that be good, and by thy merciful guidance may perform the same.” (5th *Sunday* after *Easter*.) From whence it is evident, that the holy Spirit is our guide through the journey of life. The whole work of sanctification

tion is his. He cleanses the heart, purifies it, fills it full of faith and hope and love, and enriches it with all the sweet and heavenly tempers of the blessed Jesus. He sanctifies every visitation to God's people; if it be prosperous, he keeps them humble; if it be adverse, he arms them with patience, and thus he makes all things work together for their good. God grant you may all find these truths verified by your own experience: For truths they are, and you cannot deny them. If you believe the word of God, and if you pay any regard to the doctrines of our church, you must confess, that the holy Spirit is the author and finisher of our happy journey through life. Sinful fallen man has no light to direct him in the way, until the holy Spirit remove the darkness of the understanding, and reveal every saving truth, and then he sees the paths, which lead to everlasting joy. This is the first Step. But when he sees them, he has no will to walk in them. His heart is set against them, it is hard and stony and inflexibly evil. The holy Spirit alone has power to work upon it, and to melt it down into a soft tender heart, which will freely yield to have the law of God engraven upon it. And after we have taken this step, after we have seen the right road, in which our journey lies, and are disposed to walk in it, yet we want power to proceed successfully.

Sin

Sin made us weak and infirm, and inbred corruption keeps us so, and therefore the same good Spirit, that worketh all in all, must go along with us every step to strengthen our weakness, and support us every moment to help our infirmities. We are not sufficient for these things of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God.

And since the evidence of this doctrine is clear and full, and not to be denied by any person, who allows the authority of scripture, I may here rest the matter at present, and enquire what effect your assent to it has produced. Have you desired to experience the truth of it? Or have you found the comfort of it in your souls? Do you remember when the holy Spirit opened your eyes, and brought you out of darkness into his marvellous light? Is your will reconciled to the will of God? And are you able to conform your lives and conversations to it? if you are in this happy state, and if before God the searcher of hearts, you can declare that he has done these wonders for your salvation, O be thankful unto him, and live a life of praise and gratitude. May the holy Spirit direct every thought, and word, and work, to the honour and glory of Jesus Christ your Saviour and your God. But

If you call yourselves christians, and yet know nothing of those great changes, which the holy Spirit must work in your hearts
before

before you are christians indeed, O consider in what a dangerous state you live. If God be true, your souls are in darkness, your hearts in sin, and all your faculties under the power of satan, and until you be enlightened and converted, have a new heart, and a new nature, you are children of wrath, and if you die in this state, you are lost and ruined to all eternity. If ever you see the face of God with joy, you must be renewed in the spirit of your mind. You must be made just and holy. All this must be done. You must experience it, and you will know it as certainly as you know any truth, when the holy Spirit bears testimony with your spirits, that you are the children of God.

But you have been told, that this doctrine is enthusiasm. It is so, in the opinion of the world, and it ever was, and ever will be. It must be enthusiasm to the natural man to talk of the inward working of the holy Spirit; for he discerneth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because he has no spiritual discernment. To a man who never found himself in darkness, never felt the hardness of his heart, never mourned over his inability to walk in the ways of holiness, it must appear like vision and madness to talk of being enlightened, and renewed, and strengthened in the inner man by the holy Spirit. And indeed this doctrine is ridiculous. It is be-

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come

come the very mark and badge of religious frenzy. As soon as you mention any work of the holy Spirit, you are supposed to be a little turned in the head, and if you dare maintain the necessity of his grace, you are quite given over. And this shame and reproach is hard to bear. Many persons, who in their consciences assent to the doctrine, are terrified from owning it for fear of the world, and thereby lose all its comforts. I am acquainted with several persons in this unhappy state. God grant you may be all free from it. But as it is a common temptation, with which it is probable every christian will be tried, it will therefore be proper to consider it.

This is, I suppose, your state. You assent in your minds to the truth of the doctrine, but dare not own it for fear of being called enthusiasts. What weakness is this? Consider well what you lose by being afraid of a nick-name. Can any thing be more weak and foolish, than to set out alone upon your journey for eternity, and to reject the only guide who can direct you safe, because you will be ridiculed for following his directions; and so for fear of being laughed at, you blunder on in the wrong way, until you fall at last into the pit of destruction. And then how will this reflection add to your misery, that you had no temptation to reject the holy Spirit's guidance, but the
ridicule

ridicule of the world. The scripture assured you, that he was your only guide, and you believed it. The church of *England* taught you to pray to him, and to seek him for your only guide, and you assented to her doctrines. And yet you gave up the scripture, gave up the doctrines of your own church, for fear of a nick-name; nay more, you gave up your hopes of eternal glory. Good God, what magic is there in a name, that it should charm you out of heaven! How dreadful is reproach, if it should terrify you more than hell! Should not we have thought it unaccountable, if we did not see it every day, that a hard name, which is but a sound and nothing more, should work so wonderfully upon the mind. But, men and brethren, use your reason. Will you give up all that is dear and valuable to avoid a nick-name. Will you lose all the graces and comforts of the holy Spirit for fear of being called an enthusiast? certainly you *cannot* act so weak and wicked a part, and you *will not*, if you fly to the holy Spirit for grace, whenever you find reproach like to stagger your faith. He will enable you to overcome the temptation, if you seek his strength. He can so arm you with might in the inner man, that the ridicule of the world will make no impression upon you; nay he can make it sweet, he will enable you even to court it and love it.

God

God grant you may now seek his strength. Oh that he may now be present among you with his almighty grace, and dispose every one of you to take him for your guide through the journey of life, and then he will fill your hearts with that perfect love of God, which will cast out the fear of men.

But if you are not affected with these motives, if you still see no necessity for being guided by the blessed Spirit, would to God I could discover the secret springs of your hearts, and turn them to that adorable person, whose grace alone can make you happy. O that I could convince you so far, as to put you this moment upon seeking the gracious guidance of the eternal Spirit. But this is his own work. We must plead and intreat, and importune you to seek his assistance, but the success must come from him. The word itself is but a dead letter, unless he animate it; and therefore the preaching of it can have no power, unless he accompany it. We may plant and water, but he must give the increase. O that it may be abundant this day to the glory of Jesus Christ. And all of you who desire it, will join your hearts with mine in requesting it of him.

O almighty God, who as at this time didst teach the hearts of thy faithful people by the sending to them the light of thy
holy

holy Spirit, send we beseech thee, the same Spirit to enlighten our understandings, that we may have a right judgment in all things, and may his grace operate with power upon our hearts, softening their hard stony nature, and making them willing to obey the law of God; and then grant, that he may finish this great work, by enabling us to proceed in the ways of holiness, until we happily end the journey of life. O may the eternal Spirit come down upon this whole congregation, and enlighten, and renew, and strengthen every one of us in the inner man, that we may now and evermore rejoice in his holy comfort, through the merits of Christ Jesus our Saviour, who liveth and reigneth with the Father and the Spirit, three persons of equal honour, and glory, and dominion, now and for ever. *Amen, and Amen.*

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